

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRETOR 00162 101723Z
ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 IOE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00
NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
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-----107184 101736Z /47

O 101625Z JAN 78 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 0151
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY
UDISDF/AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK PRIORITY 009
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 0162

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, SF, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: BOTHA REACTION TO RESCHEDULING PROXIMITY TALKS

REF: USUN 0070

1. ON BEHALF OF THE PRETORIA FIVE, THE FRENCH AND
AMERICAN AMBASSADORS CALLED ON DFA UNDER SECRETARY
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PAGE 02 PRETOR 00162 101723Z

VAN DALSEN AT 4:30 PM (LOCAL TIME) ON JAN 10. IT WAS NOT
POSSIBLE TO SEE EITHER FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA OR DFA
SECRETARY FOURIE, BOTH OF WHOM WERE NOT AVAILABLE.

2. THE TWO AMBASSADORS PRESENTED ORALLY THE STATEMENT
AGREED BY THE CONTACT GROUP AT ITS JANUARY 9 MEETING
INQUIRING WHETHER BOTHA COULD MAKE HIMSELF AVAILABLE

FOR TALKS IN NEW YORK IN THE WEEK BEGINNING 30 JANUARY. VAN DALSEN RESPONDED THAT ON THE BASIS OF THE MC HENRY-EKSTEEN CONVERSATION HE WAS IN A POSITION TO GIVE US THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S CONSIDERED REACTION TO THE PROPOSAL FOR RESCHEDULING. HE SAID THAT BOTHA WAS KEENLY DISAPPOINTED IN THE PROPOSED CHANGE OF DATES. IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO ACCEPT TALKS DURING THE WEEK OF 30 JANUARY BECAUSE THE NO-CONFIDENCE DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN ON MONDAY, JANUARY 30. FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES ARE EXPECTED TO BE DEBATED AND THE MINISTER FEELS HE OWES IT TO THE PARLIAMENT TO BE PRESENT. HOWEVER, HE WISHES THE FIVE GOVERNMENTS TO KNOW THAT HE IS STILL PREPARED TO GO TO NEW YORK FOR TALKS BEGINNING JANUARY 17, AND THIS IS HIS PREFERRED OPTION. IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE, THE HE ASKS WHETHER THE CONTACT GROUP CAN COME TO SOUTH AFRICA BEFORE JAN. 30. IF IN TURN THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE, HE SUGGESTS THAT THE CONTACT GROUP'S PROPOSALS BE SUBMITTED TO THE SAG IN WRITING SO THAT IN DUE COURSE THE SAG CAN GIVE A CONSIDERED REPLY. NO DATES WERE SPECIFIED IN CONNECTION WITH THIS THIRD ALTERNATIVE.

3. THE TWO AMBASSADORS NOTED THAT NONE OF THE OPTIONS MENTIONED BY THE MINISTER WOULD ALLOW FOR PROXIMITY TALKS WHICH AT THIS JUNCTURE WOULD BE HIGHLY USEFUL. THEY INQUIRED WHETHER THE MINISTER HAD GIVEN CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PRETOR 00162 101723Z

CONSIDERATION TO THE POSSIBILITY OF HOLDING THE TALKS ONE WEEK PRIOR OR ONE WEEK AFTER JANUARY 30. VAN DALSEN REPLIED THAT HE WAS NOT ABLE TO COMMENT ON THIS INQUIRY. HE HAD RELAYED THE MINISTER'S PROPOSALS AND WOULD APPRECIATE THE CONTACT GROUP'S REACTION TO THEM. IF THE CONTACT GROUP HAD COUNTER PROPOSALS HE ASSUMED THAT THE MINISTER WOULD CONSIDER THEM. IN CLOSING VAN DALSEN NOTED THAT PART OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATION WAS SCHEDULED TO LEAVE ON JANUARY 12 AND THE BALANCE ON JANUARY 13. WE ASSUME THAT THIS REMARK WAS MEANT TO UNDERSCORE THE URGENCY WITH WHICH THE SOUTH AFRICANS AWAIT A RESPONSE. BOWDLER

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